

part, by opening its arms and its heart to shelter the homeless from Louisiana and Mississippi.

This is just the first bill that Congress will need to enact to recover from this terrible disaster. It will provide an immediate infusion of money to allow FEMA and the Department of Defense to address the most immediate needs, ensuring there is no disruption in funding for relief efforts. Because much of the region is still underwater, the full extent of the damage is unknown. It will take some time to assess the scope and cost of this disaster, but Congress will ensure that FEMA and other federal agencies have the resources they need to assist the citizens of this region to get back on their feet.

#### RECOGNIZING HAROLD KURTH

#### HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 6, 2005*

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Mr. Harold Kurth of Citrus County, Florida, a Purple Heart recipient from World War II.

Volunteering for service in 1943, Mr. Kurth's ambition was to join the Air Corp, but was inducted into the Army at Camp Roberts to receive his basic training instead.

Following his initial training, Mr. Kurth was aboard the Sea Witch on his way to Guadalcanal when the ship was fired on by Japanese submarines. Luckily, the Sea Witch made it safely to Guadalcanal without further contact with the enemy.

Mr. Kurth then took part in campaigns on the Solomon Islands and the Philippines, where he was wounded by a hand grenade while guarding a church in Manila. He was part of a group of six soldiers who came under enemy fire in the church yard following a river crossing. Several of his compatriots were injured as well in the battle.

Part of the "Heavyweights of the South Pacific," Mr. Kurth's division was credited with killing 12,500 enemy soldiers during World War II. Serving three years without a furlough, Mr. Kurth returned to the United States on Christmas Eve, 1945.

Mr. Speaker, true American heroes like Harold Kurth should be honored for their service to our Nation and for their commitment and sacrifices in battle. I am honored to present Mr. Kurth with his long-over Purple Heart. He is truly one of America's greatest generation.

#### IN HONOR OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SINFONIA MEXICANA

#### HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 6, 2005*

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to pay tribute to the Sinfonia Mexicana, on the occasion of its 20th anniversary.

This important institution, located in San Bernardino, has been thrilling audiences since 1985, when Mario Porras and Charles

Eisenhard inspired members of the Inland Empire Symphony Association, local civic leaders, and then Consul of Mexico Emerenciano Rodriguez, to form a committee to present a unique concert of Mexico's symphonic masterpieces. Consul Rodriguez was selected to chair the committee for this exciting endeavor. The concert was a tremendous success! Enthused, the committee continued to present annual state-of-the-art musical and culturally enriching programs for the enjoyment of the entire community.

The purpose of this organization is to present the finest music compositions of Mexico to the Inland Empire. In addition to its outstanding music programming, the group has committed numerous volunteer hours and financial contributions throughout these many years, with participation of organizations and individuals that shared in the identical goal of program development and other auxiliary components.

The current success of the Sinfonia Mexicana has been recognized as an outstanding achievement in the Inland Empire and beyond. It is a well-established fact that Mexican folkloric music is enormously popular and world-renowned; however, what was relatively unknown to many people locally, was Mexico's veritable treasure of classical and symphonic music created by notable composers and arrangers—many of whom Sinfonia showcased over the past 19 years. They included: Carlos Chávez, Pablo Moncayo, Manuel M. Ponce, Silvestre Revueltas, Miguel Bernal, Blás Galindo, Juventino Rosa, Enrique Mora, Manuel Enríques, Ricardo Castro, Candelario Huízar, Felipe Villanueva, and others. To be sure, Chávez's "Sinfonia India" is a fine example of the unification of Yaqui and Seri indigenous melodies into a symphonic masterpiece.

A typical Sinfonia program of Mexican classical music often features a guest conductor and/or artists from Mexico performing with the San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra at the historic California Theatre of Performing Arts in San Bernardino. Guest conductors have included Abraham Chávez, Sergio Cardenas, Francisco Savín, Guadalupe Flores, Eduardo Díazmuñoz, Enrique Diemecke, José Hernandez, Stewart Robertson, and Jeff Nevin. On two occasions Sinfonia had the distinction to host the "Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México" in San Bernardino. On their first visit, Maestro Francisco Savín served as musical director.

Sinfonia has presented a variety of special performances by outstanding ensembles from Mexico and Southern California. Sinfonia is now organized as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and yet maintains its volunteer-driven mission to foster the awareness of Mexico's symphonic musical masterpieces, and educate the public of the fine music and culture of Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, that is a résumé of the substantial achievements of this important cultural institution. My family and I enjoy this music. We encourage everyone in the community to partake of this great resource.

I ask that a more detailed history of Sinfonia be included in the Congressional Record, for public display and historical preservation. And again, I say: thank you to Sinfonia, for preserving these important musical traditions!

#### SINFONIA MEXICANA—A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Sinfonia Mexicana has been thrilling audiences since 1985 when Mario Porras and

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Sinfonia has presented a variety of special performances by outstanding ensembles from Mexico and Southern California. They featured the West Coast premiere of "Navidades" by the internationally acclaimed Ballet Folklórico de Amalia Hernandez from Mexico City. And, from Baja California, Sinfonia presented "Bastian y Bastiana" Mozart's comic opera performed by a student group, Grupo Juvenil de Tijuana. Moreover, Sinfonia presented the West Coast premiere of the first Chicano opera, "Esperanza" composed by David Bishop and the libretto by Carlos Morton based on the classic cult film, "Salt of the Earth." The opera was performed by the Euterpe Opera Theatre of Pasadena, which featured soprano Ariella Vaccarino and tenor Eric Castro.